

**METHOD AND SYSTEM FOR ENERGY MANAGEMENT IN A SIMULTANEOUS MULTI-
THREADED (SMT) PROCESSING SYSTEM INCLUDING PER-THREAD DEVICE
USAGE MONITORING**

5

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

The present application is related to previously-filed co-
pending U.S. Patent applications Ser. No. 10/_____, attorney
10 docket No. AUS920030761US1 entitled "METHOD AND SYSTEM FOR POWER
MANAGEMENT INCLUDING DEVICE CONTROLLER-BASED DEVICE USE
EVALUATION AND POWER-STATE CONTROL" filed on December 3, 2003,
and Ser. No. 10/_____, attorney docket No. AUS920030763US1
entitled "METHOD AND SYSTEM FOR ENERGY MANAGEMENT VIA ENERGY-
15 AWARE PROCESS SCHEDULING" the specifications of which are herein
incorporated by reference.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

20 1. Technical Field:

The present invention relates generally to energy management
in processing systems, and more particularly, to energy
management within a multi-threaded processing system.

25

2. Description of the Related Art:

Present-day computing systems include both single-threaded
30 (uniprocessor) processing systems and simultaneous multi-threaded
(SMT) processing systems. In the past, SMT processing systems
have typically been restricted to large server systems and
dedicated mainframe systems, but with the advent of desktop
computer operating systems that support multiple simultaneous

thread execution and processor technology that permits integration of multiple processor cores within a single integrated circuit, SMT processors are likely to appear within desktop and notebook computing systems in the very near future.

5 In large fixed-location systems and small portable systems, energy management has become increasingly important for battery energy management in portable systems, and for power dissipation management in all computing systems. Recent designs push the envelope of power dissipation both within processor integrated
10 circuits, and within the total system package.

SMT processors provide very efficient use of processor resources, as multiple threads may simultaneously use processor resources. Multiple threads are concurrently executed in an SMT
15 processor so that multiple processor execution units, such as floating point units, fixed point instruction units, load/store units and others can be performing tasks for one (or more depending on the execution units' capabilities) of multiple threads simultaneously. SMT processors also may simultaneously
20 use external resources, such as memory and peripheral devices. The simultaneous use raises the difficulty of determining how resources are used by an individual thread, as within a given execution slice, multiple threads may access an external device.

25 The above-incorporated patent applications disclose methods and systems for energy management that provide a fine level of control of power use by memory modules and other devices within a processing system by providing device controllers that measure the use of a resource and automatically take the resource off-
30 line (i.e., place the device in a power saving state or cut power to the device), when the device is being infrequently accessed, or is likely to be infrequently accessed based on a next scheduled process. The power management schemes disclosed in the

above-incorporated patent applications include per-process measurement of device usage in order to inform the energy management decision making process. However, in an SMT system, the scheduler will schedule execution of multiple threads at each execution slice, and so the assumption of per-process collection of information based on measuring device usage during is no longer accurate, as multiple threads can access the same device such as a memory module during a given execution slice and when another execution slice is scheduled, the same threads may not be executing.

It is therefore desirable to provide a method and system for providing energy management within an SMT processing system, that can reduce power consumption by placing resources that are used infrequently for a given "next" thread set in a power-saving state, while providing high processing throughput by maintaining low resource latency for resources that are likely to be used frequently for the next thread set.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The objective of reducing power consumption by placing
5 infrequently used resources in a power-saving state for a next
thread set while maintaining low latency for frequently used
resources for the next thread set is provided in a method and
system, as well as device controllers and performance monitors
provide a mechanism for implementing the method and system.

10 The method and system provide per-device usage evaluators
within one or more performance monitor units or a device
controller that monitor the use of connected devices on a per-
thread basis. The state of the usage evaluators is saved at each
15 context switch, providing a quasi-continuous measurement of
device use by each thread. When a next set of threads is
scheduled for execution, the previous usage measurement state for
those threads is restored to the usage evaluators. A device
controller, such as memory controller provides energy-management
20 control registers and per-device usage evaluators. The per-device
power-management registers are populated with power management
settings for each device controlled by the device controller at
each context switch and thresholds set for automatically changing
the power management state of each individual device in
25 conformity with the device usage level, thereby providing for
intelligent and independent power management of each device.
without intervention by the operating system and processor(s).
The thresholds are set in conformity with thread usage
information determined from the per-thread usage monitors, so
30 that a set of thresholds appropriate to the set of threads
scheduled for execution in the next execution slice provide more
effective energy management in the SMT processing system.

The device controller can be a memory controller, as mentioned above, the controlled devices can be memory modules coupled to the memory controller, and the per-thread usage evaluators may be located in a performance monitor unit (PMU) or
5 within the device controller.

The foregoing and other objectives, features, and advantages of the invention will be apparent from the following, more particular, description of the preferred embodiment of the
10 invention, as illustrated in the accompanying drawings.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

The novel features believed characteristic of the invention
5 are set forth in the appended claims. The invention itself,
however, as well as a preferred mode of use, further objectives,
and advantages thereof, will best be understood by reference to
the following detailed description of an illustrative embodiment
when read in conjunction with the accompanying drawings, wherein
10 like reference numerals indicate like components, and:

Figure 1 is a block diagram of a simultaneous multi-threaded
processing system in accordance with an embodiment of the
invention.

15 **Figure 2** is a block diagram depicting details of performance
monitor units **19A-D** of **Figure 1**.

Figure 3 is a block diagram depicting details of memory
20 controller **14** of Figure 1.

Figure 4 is a block diagram depicting details of power
management unit **17** of **Figure 2**.

25 **Figure 5** is a flowchart depicting a method in accordance
with an embodiment of the present invention.

DESCRIPTION OF ILLUSTRATIVE EMBODIMENT

The present invention concerns local control and evaluation of power management settings at the device controller level within a multi-threaded processing system. The above-incorporated patent application "METHOD AND SYSTEM FOR POWER MANAGEMENT INCLUDING DEVICE CONTROLLER-BASED DEVICE USE EVALUATION AND POWER-STATE CONTROL", provides a scheme for local control and evaluation of power management settings within a uni-processor system, but does not provide per-thread usage evaluation so that when a context switch occurs, power management settings can be made in conformity with an expected use of devices for the set of threads that will be executed in the next execution slice.

The present invention provides for per-thread device usage measurement by providing a mechanism for reading and writing the state of a set of per-thread usage counters for each controlled device. Each device has an associated set of counters, one for each thread supported for execution by the multi-threaded processing system. So, if the processing system supports simultaneous execution of four threads, a set of four counters for each device is provided so that individual usage by each thread executed during a given execution slice can be determined. When a context switch occurs, the states of each of the counters is read and stored by the operating system (generally by a low-level operating system or hypervisor above which multiple operating system instances may be executing). Thus the hypervisor software accumulates information about usage of devices for each active thread in the system, which is generally a number of threads much larger than the number of simultaneously executing threads. At a context switch, the hypervisor software determines which threads will be run in the next execution slice, and can retrieve current usage information for each device for the next

set of threads. The usage information is used for two purposes:
1) to restore the states of the usage counters so as to provide
quasi-continuous measurement of device usage by the next set of
threads, and 2) to provide input to the power management control
5 scheme for predicting usage levels of the controlled devices for
the next set of threads. The hypervisor software sets power
management states or thresholds for the controlled devices via a
power-management aware device controller that couples the
controlled devices to the processing system.

10 Embodiments of the present invention include per-device
usage counter sets that are incorporated within individual
performance monitors, one for each thread, or within a single
performance monitor. The usage counter sets may alternatively be
15 incorporated within a device controller, such as a memory
controller.

The illustrative embodiment provided herein is directed
toward a memory controller coupled to memory modules and per-
20 thread performance monitor units (PMUs), but it should be
understood that the techniques of the present invention may also
be applied to other devices and device controllers within a
processing system, such as disk controllers, peripheral
controllers and network/device hub controllers. It should be
25 understood also that the PMUs may be a single PMU or may be
entirely incorporated within the device controller(s). In
general, controllers and devices for which there is a wait-time
penalty incurred for recovery from a power saving state and in
which no device responses are lost due to placing the device in a
30 power-saving state (e.g., a hub or network controller that will
wake on input) can provide reduced power usage through the
techniques of the present invention.

With reference now to the figures, and in particular with reference to **Figure 1**, there is depicted a block diagram of a simultaneous multi-threaded processing embodying a method and a system in accordance with the present invention. Memory controller **14** is coupled to a dynamic random-access memory (DRAM) array **15** and provides control signals in the form of address lines and command strobes. Memory controller **14** is also coupled to a processor **10** and peripherals **16** for storing and loading program instructions and data. As mentioned above, peripherals **16** may also include device controllers and controlled devices embodying the techniques and structures of the present invention, but for the purposes of illustration, the techniques and structures of the present invention will be described as embodied within the overall system of **Figure 1**. Processor **10** includes two cores **11A** and **11B** each of which is capable of supporting simultaneous execution of two threads, so that four threads may be active within the system of **Figure 1** at any time. Cores **11A** and **11B** are coupled to one or more cache units **12** that generally provide the memory interface to memory controller **14** and also to an I/O unit **13** that provides for communication with peripherals **16** and device controllers such as memory controller **14**.

Performance monitor units (PMUs) **3A-D** include the per-thread usage counter sets mentioned above, as well as logic for determining which device is being accessed at each access event. PMUs **3A-D** are coupled to memory controller **14** (and in other embodiments, other device controllers within peripherals **16**) by a PMU bus **5B**, which transfers event information and node numbers to PMUs **3A-D** at each access made by memory controller **14**. PMUs **3A-D** are also coupled to system I/O bus **5A** so that the hypervisor software can read and write the states of the internal usage counter sets.

Memory controller **14**, as described in the above-referenced patent application, includes a power management unit **17** that stores power management settings for each memory module within DRAM array **15**. In larger systems, multiple DRAM arrays **15** may be coupled to memory controller **14** by one or more Synchronous Memory Interfaces (SMIs) **18** which provide partitioning of the memory subsystem into large banks. If incorporated, SMIs **18** could also include some of the features of the present invention, such as per-thread and/or total usage counters/evaluators and/or control registers holding power settings for the memory nodes as described below. Therefore, any inclusion of portions of the structures techniques of the present invention within SMIs **18**, should be understood as contemplated by the present invention, as SMIs **18** are device controllers within the context of the present invention.

DRAM array **15** includes multiple dual in-line memory modules (DIMMs) **15A-15D**, each of which can be power-managed separately. Other power-management granularity is possible, such as powering down banks within DIMMs **15A-15D**, if bank-level power management is possible. However, in general, power management at present is generally performed at the DIMM level. DIMMs **15A-15D** each include memory devices **19A** and interface circuits **19B** that include a phase-lock loop (PLL) for synchronizing the memory device **19A** with the DIMM bus interface to SMI **18** or memory controller **14**. The power management states available for setting within DIMMs **15A-15D**, vary based on design, but generally a standby state, a power down mode, and a self-refresh state are available, as well as a state in which power to the module is removed. In the self-refresh state, the external PLL within interface circuits **19B** can be disabled. The PLL consumes a significant amount of the total

power consumed by DIMMs **15A-15D**, so the self-refresh state is a very desirable power management state, but the recovery time for the self-refresh state is very high, as the PLL must be reactivated and re-synchronize memory devices **19A** with the external bus.

In order to effectively use selective DIMM power management, known techniques within the operating system memory manager are employed to effectively group allocated memory resources so that the resources are aggregated within the minimum number of memory modules as described in the above-referenced patent application. For SMT systems, the partitioning of memory modules by process will only be effective for power management if the hypervisor software generally schedules simultaneous execution of threads owned by the same process, otherwise, all of the modules could be in use simultaneously due to accesses by the multiple threads.

As in the above-referenced patent application, the present invention provides a device controller that determines usage information for each controlled device and saves usage evaluation states at the context switch, thereby isolating the evaluation of device use to each execution slice, while providing the ability to evaluate device use on more than a single execution slice. The device controller provides power management control via registers and threshold evaluators introduced within the memory controller, portions of which may be alternatively located within the SMIs or memory modules themselves. Local control of power management permits the device controller to issue power management control commands to the controlled devices. When the use of a device falls below a threshold, the device controller sends a command to lower the power usage state of the device, without requiring that the system processor(s) intervene in the power management decision.

However, in the present invention, the usage evaluators described in the above-referenced patent application are used to determine a total use of the associated device by all threads
5 executing within an execution slice, as the power management logic is not thread-selective. Further counters are provided in addition to determine per-thread usage of associated devices to that power management can be tailored to each thread set that is executed in the processing system. The per-thread usage
10 information is used to adjust the thresholds in memory controller and set the initial power management states of the devices, so that at each execution slice, appropriate power management settings are made for the next set of threads that are scheduled for execution.

Referring now to **Figure 2**, details of PMUs **3A-D** are depicted in an exemplary PMU **3** in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention. PMU **3** includes a set of usage counters **41A-D** each associated with a corresponding one of DIMMs **15A-D**. A node
20 decoder **40** determines which node an access event transmitted over PMU bus **5B** corresponds to and selects the appropriate counters **41A-D** for updating. Memory accesses are communicated to PMU **3** via PMU bus **5B** in the form of events that are sent on separate sets of signals for each thread. In addition to the events, a module
25 number is sent by the memory controller for each access over PMU bus **5B** that enables node decoder **40** to select the appropriate usage counter **41A-D** to updated for the memory module that is being accessed.

30 An I/O interface **42** provides a connection to processor **10** so that program instructions for reading the counter values and writing values to set the states of counters **41A-D** can be implemented. As mentioned above, the depicted embodiment of PMU **3**

is not intended to be limiting, and PMU 3 may include counters for each thread or may be integrated within a device controller. Additionally, counters 41A-D may be counters for measuring frequency of access in each execution slice (standard counters) or may be inter-arrival time counters as used in the memory controller power management unit of the above-referenced patent application and as reiterated below with respect to the details of that memory controller.

Referring now to **Figure 3**, details of memory controller 14 are depicted in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention. **Figure 3** is also used generally to describe various embodiments of the present invention in the form of alternative structures in which some internal blocks will be mentioned as optionally located in SMIs or memory modules as described above.

Address and control signals are provided to an address decoder/mapper 24 from processor core 10, peripherals 16 or may be generated internally in the case of refresh or cache control implementations. Address decoder/mapper 24 provides signals to a row/column access circuit 20 that provides command strobes, and DIMM selectors as well as column/row address signals to DIMMs 15A-D via access control/command logic 21 for performing memory accesses. Access control/command logic also forwards commands from power management unit 17 to DIMMs 15A-D for setting power management states of individual DIMMs 15A-D. In embodiments where access counters are provided within DIMMs 15A-D, commands are also forwarded to retrieve the access counts for use by power management unit 17. Memory controller 14 also includes data buffers 22 for buffering data transferred to and from DIMMs 15A-D, as well as a control I/O port 29 for receiving control

information from processor core **10**, as well as providing register read ports from which processor core **10** can retrieve the current status of memory controller **14**. Additionally, control I/O port **29** provides access to registers within power management unit by processor core **10** as will be described in detail below.

Power management unit **17** includes a plurality of energy management registers **26**, provided on a per-device basis (one set for each of DIMMs **15A-D** in the depicted embodiment). The values set in energy management registers **26** provide for control of power management states of DIMMs **15A-D** and may include direct state setting values, overriding local control by power management unit **17**, as well as control of the states to which power management unit **17** can set a particular DIMM. Thresholds may also be programmed via energy management registers **26**, as well as the type of thresholds to be applied, if multiple threshold types are supported by the power management logic. In general, threshold values may be a single fixed threshold, in which the current inter-arrival time (or other significant indicator of memory use such as access frequency) of memory accesses for a given process and module is compared to a level programmed by the operating system. When the inter-arrival time exceeds the predetermined threshold, the particular module is placed in a lower-power operating mode by the device controller via access control and command logic **21**. Alternatively, an adaptive threshold may be selected and the threshold adaptively adjusted by power management unit **17** logic so that the threshold level is adjusted based on historical access to the module by the process, or adjusted based on accesses to other modules (power prioritization for limited power allocation schemes).

Both the threshold values and types, as well as the initial power management state for each execution slice is set during the

context switch by the hypervisor software. The values of the thresholds and control registers are determined from historical values retrieved from PMUs **19A-D** and stored in system memory. When a new set of threads is to be scheduled for execution, the per-thread usage values are retrieved and used to determine a new set of thresholds and control register settings in order to provide effective power management states for the next execution slice.

Power management unit **17** also includes inter-arrival time evaluators **25A-D** that statistically measure the inter-arrival time for each of DIMMs **15A-D** for the total of all accesses by all threads. As mentioned above, inter-arrival time evaluators **25A-D** could be located in DIMMS or the DIMMS could include counters that evaluators **25A-D** use to update their statistics, and if so implemented, may be read by power management unit **17** via commands sent through access control/command logic **21**. By whatever mechanism the inter-arrival counts and/or statistics are obtained, upon a context switch, indicated by processor core **10** via control I/O port **29**, the state of the inter-arrival statistics may read and stored external to memory controller **14**, and written to memory controller **14**, but this is not required as it was in the above-referenced patent application, as per-thread set information is not necessarily useful. However, if thread sets are commonly repeated, this data could be used to more quickly estimate the proper power management and threshold settings in alternative to determining the new settings from the per-thread counters. Therefore, in general, it is not necessary to save or restore the state of inter-arrival evaluators **25A-D**. Storage registers and I/O interface **27** provides the mechanism by which the operating system via a system processor can capture and store the state of evaluators **25A-D**, and may be snapshot

registers that capture the states of the evaluator for each device and temporarily the states until the operating system can store them, or may use simple output buffers that permit reading of the evaluator state directly. Storage registers and I/O interface **27** also provides an input port for writing values corresponding to a state of evaluators **25A-D**. Control I/O port **29** provides the connection of I/O interface to an external bus for access by processor **10**.

Referring now to **Figure 4**, further details of power management unit **17** are depicted. Inter-arrival time counters/evaluators **25** for each node determine whether the infrequency of accesses to each node justifies setting a lower power management level and if such determination is made, commands are sent to DIMMS **15A-15D** via command unit **32**. As mentioned above, upon a context switch, the states of counters/evaluators **25** may be read via I/O interface **27** and can be are stored along with other state information (such as registers), as well as the per-thread counts read from PMUs **19A-D** in buffers maintained by the operating system kernel. Previously stored states of per-thread usage counts from PMUs **19A-D** that are associated with the next set of threads are retrieved from memory and used to determine settings that are and sent via I/O interface **27** to counters/evaluators **25** and energy management registers **26**. Registers **26** are coupled to command unit **32** to apply any overrides of local control. Energy management registers **26** are also coupled to counters/evaluators **25** to apply any threshold information set by the operating system via threshold registers **35**, the values of which are also determined from the per-thread usage counts for the next set of threads. Energy management registers **26** may also include energy management to selectively enable evaluators **25**, in particular for turning off

evaluators when local control is disabled, in order to conserve the power consumed by evaluators **25**, but are also used to enable evaluators periodically when the system is in a power-conserving state.

5

Evaluators **25** compare a number of accesses performed for each device through access control **21** to a fixed timebase **34** via ratio accumulators **36**, which estimate the inter-arrival time of accesses based on the frequency of accesses versus timebase **34**
10 counts. A threshold comparator **38** compares the value of the ratio accumulator **36** to a fixed or adaptively derived threshold **35** and if the access inter-arrival time rises above the threshold **35** value, directs command unit **32** to lower the power consuming state of the device, and command unit **32** directs command logic to do so
15 if local control is enabled in the associated energy management register **26** for the device.

Referring now to **Figure 5**, a flowchart depicting a method in
20 accordance with an embodiment of the invention is shown. First, memory controller **14** (or other unit incorporating the power management control mechanisms disclosed above) receives initial power management settings for each node (**step 50**) and sets the initial thresholds (**step 51**) and power management states for each
25 node (**step 52**). Inter-arrival times are measured for each memory node during execution of the current process (**step 53**), as well as per-node individually for each thread (**step 54**). If a threshold value of inter-arrival time is met (**decision 55**), the memory module is placed in a lower power-consuming state (**step**
30 **56**) by the memory controller directly, without intervention by the processor. Next, when a context switch occurs (**decision 57**), the inter-arrival time statistics are saved for the threads in

the thread set being switched out (**step 58**) and the power management thresholds are adjusted in conformity with the statistics for the next thread set (**step 59**). The previously-saved statistics for the next thread set is built up and loaded
5 into the usage counters (**step 60**). Until the scheme is disabled or the system shut down (**decision 61**), the new power management states are set for the thread set being activated, i.e., the new current thread set (**step 52**) and steps 52-60 are repeated.

10 While the invention has been particularly shown and described with reference to the preferred embodiment thereof, it will be understood by those skilled in the art that the foregoing and other changes in form, and details may be made therein without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention.